

# COMPLETING THE STATE OF TENNESSEE EMPLOYMENT APPLICATION

The key to success is within your grasp!



For any competitive Career Service job that you apply for, your education and experience background must be evaluated to determine whether you meet the minimum qualifications required for the job. This background information must be contained on the employment application you provide to the Department of Personnel. In addition, for those jobs requiring a rating of education and experience, the information provided on the application is the basis for your score and register placement. Therefore, it is critical that all information concerning your education and experience background is completed correctly. The following tips may help insure your success in completing your application.



First and foremost, read and follow all the instructions provided with the application form. If any instruction is unclear to you, call (615) 741-4841 or contact a member of the Applicant Services staff for assistance.

Take time to thoroughly review each page of information you complete on the application to be sure that you have not inadvertently omitted an important piece of information. Also, make sure that you have signed your application (or completed the “I certify” final submit step if applying online).

It is very important that you retain a copy of your completed application for future reference (e.g., to make copies to provide at interviews). Please note that you should omit page 2 of your application when providing a copy at an interview.

## TIPS FOR COMPLETING EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION

**Primary/Secondary Education:** In this section, you only need to indicate the highest level completed up to the point of high school graduation, and then enter the date completed (or last attended) in the space provided.

**Postsecondary Education:** In this section you should list the names of any colleges, universities, trade or vocational schools attended, along with the city and state location of the school. The location is important as there are many schools from state to state with the same name, and the Applicant Services staff will need to verify that the school is accredited. The dates attended should also be provided to assist in the verification of education information. To insure that rating credit can be given, it is absolutely essential to provide total **quarter hours** completed and indicate “Yes” or “No” to the question “Did you graduate?” The evaluation and rating of your application may also be significantly impacted if the type of degree and major field of study (or area of concentration) are not clearly indicated. You should refrain from using short abbreviations when providing this information. While a particular abbreviation may be commonly used within a certain academic program, it is possible that the same abbreviation could refer to any number of fields of study. For example, a degree in “CS” could mean “Computer Science” or “Criminal Science” or a number of other possible fields of study. To be sure your degree is credited accurately, spell out as clearly as possible your field of study.

Where asked to list the number of quarter hours completed in various specific coursework fields, you should convert any semester hours earned to quarter hours by simply multiplying the semester hours completed by 1.5 for each subject area listed. Failing to convert the semester hours to quarter hours may keep you from getting the full credit you deserve. It should also be pointed out that not all academic fields are listed in this section of the application. The information is requested only for those areas in which specific course work is required to be able to qualify or receive specific rating credit for particular jobs in state government. **TRANSCRIPTS** are helpful if additional information is needed with regard to specific hours completed. It is recommended that unofficial transcripts be submitted to the Applicant Services Division. However, official sealed transcripts will need to be submitted upon employment.

**Licenses/Certifications:** Up to date information on any licenses or certifications relevant to employment should be listed in this section. Copies of licenses may be attached to your paper application, but this should not be done in lieu of completing the information in this section. The license and certification information should be updated with each new application submitted.

**SEE OTHER SIDE FOR TIPS ON COMPLETING WORK EXPERIENCE INFORMATION**

## TIPS FOR COMPLETING WORK EXPERIENCE INFORMATION

**Complete work history information should be provided unless a full and complete application has been submitted to the Department of Personnel since March, 1999. This applies to all applicants, including current state employees. If in doubt of application requirements or date of last application, contact a member of the Applicant Services staff for assistance.**

**Employment Dates:** It is mandatory that both the month and year are provided for each work experience you include on your application. Otherwise, the experience can not be considered in determining whether you meet the minimum qualifications for a job or in giving you points in a rating of education and experience. If all experiences listed have incomplete dates, the application will be mailed back to you for the required information. This will clearly cause a significant delay in the processing of your application.

**Title or Rank of Position:** Although the description of duties will be the most important factor in evaluating each work experience, it is very helpful to indicate the job title of each position held. For U.S. military experience, it is essential that **specific military rank** be provided since the rank will allow the rating specialist to determine whether or not professional level experience credit can be given.

**Average # of Hours Worked Per Week:** As with employment dates, if this information is not provided, the experience can not be considered in determining whether you meet the minimum qualifications for a job or in giving you points in a rating of education and experience. If this information is omitted for all jobs listed on the application, the application will be mailed back to you for the required information. Again, this causes a significant delay in the processing of your application.

**Employer Information (employer name, address, telephone, type of business, name of immediate supervisor):** This information is primarily requested to allow for verification of the work experience. However, indicating the "Type of Business" can be very helpful to the rating specialist in assuring a correct understanding of the nature of the work being performed.

**Average # of Employees You Supervised:** For many jobs, the minimum qualifications specify supervisory experience as a qualification requirement. If the number of employees supervised is not specified, then the particular work experience listed could potentially not be credited as supervisory experience regardless of title indicated or duties described. Conversely, indicating a number in this block, but omitting any reference to supervisory duties within the description of duties and responsibilities may also prevent the experience from being credited as "supervisory."

**Major Duties and Responsibilities and % Time:** The importance of taking the time to complete this information thoroughly cannot be overstated. Given the importance of this section, and recognizing that it is probably also the most difficult portion of the application to complete, several tips are provided below.

- ✓ Be sure to provide clearly written statements, indicating the specific action or tasks performed. Avoid using such statements as "assisted in . . ." or "helped with . . ." A person could "assist" or "help" in any number of ways. For example, an individual could say "assisted with preparation of the annual budget" but not say how he/she assisted. From this statement, the rating specialist cannot know if the experience involved simply "typing the budget document" or if it possibly involved "collecting data and making decisions with regard to determining the budget expenditures for a fiscal year."
- ✓ Avoid using abbreviations no matter how commonly they may be used within the particular field of work you are describing.
- ✓ Although it may seem impossible to say what percentages of time were spent on each job duty, do not omit this information. If completing the online application, you will not be allowed to continue to the next step until this information is entered and percentages indicated total 100%. Therefore, you must give your best estimate of the percentages of time for each job duty. This information is required for an accurate evaluation and rating. Failure to provide the requested percentages could result in your application being returned to you.
- ✓ If you changed positions or if job duties changed significantly while working for a particular company or organization, you should list each position or change in job duties as a separate period of employment. Provide complete information including dates, job duties, etc. for each position or change in job duties. Failure to list the position changes may result in the application being mailed back to you.
- ✓ For **MILITARY EXPERIENCE**, each change in rank or position should also be listed as a separate period of employment. It is important that rank/title, dates rank/title held, and duties performed in that time frame are all included with each rank or position held. It is recommended that a **DD-2586 form** accompany the application of any career military service applicant since this form outlines the key information required with regard to military background. However, the form should not be submitted in lieu of providing the information as requested on the application form.
- ✓ Copying "Examples of Duties and Responsibilities" from a State job specification as a way of describing your own job duties for a non-State job is not acceptable, nor is "tailoring" your job duties to each job for which you apply. It is very important that job duties are described consistently from one application to the next. Inconsistencies may require the Department of Personnel to place an applicant record in "suspense" status, which keeps the applicant's name from appearing on employment registers until such time as the inconsistencies can be adequately corrected or clarified.